

CDF NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

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CDF Ends Fire Season 2001 in Northern California

Sacramento- The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) ended fire season 2001 as of 8 a.m. today in the northern half of the state. Portions of the southern region are expected to end fire season next week. The CDF units from Fresno north to the Oregon border will be releasing seasonal firefighters, reducing dispatching levels and closing some remote wildland stations.

Recent cool, wet weather has reduced the threat of wildfire in the northern part of California. However, CDF is a year-round fire department in many parts of the state. As crews are available, they will continue providing such services as medical aid, search and rescue, structure fire protection and hazardous materials response.

“This was a difficult fire season for CDF,” said CDF Director Andrea Tuttle. “We lost two of our finest pilots in a collision in August. We also had several close calls when very aggressive wildfires overran some of our crews. This year reminded us just how dangerous wildland firefighting can be.”

Statistically, the fire season can be categorized as moderate. Although CDF has battled 6,451 wildfires so far this year (close to the five year average), the number of acres burned has been significantly below the average. Earlier this spring the Governor augmented CDF’s budget significantly in response to record low fuel moistures. This allowed for an extra firefighter to be placed on each of the Department’s 180 engines in the north state, the reopening of 10 lookout towers that had previously been closed due to budget cuts, and the return of five inactive fire crews. CDF officials believe this increased staffing played a big role in keeping the acreage burned at such a low number.

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